# Visit of the Prince of Wales

OCTOBER 12, 1860.

# To the Deaf and Dumb Asylum.

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# VISIT

OF

# HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS, THE PRINCE OF WALES,

## AND SUITE,

TO THE

## NEW YORK INSTITUTION

FOR THE

# Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb,

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12, 1860.

[From The New York Herald of October 13, 1860:]

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FOR THE

# Instruction of the Deaf and Dumb.

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[From the New York Herald, October 13, 1860.]

# VISIT OF THE PRINCE OF WALES

TO THE

# Institution for the Deaf and Dumb.

INTENSELY INTERESTING EXERCISES — A POEM BY MRS. PEET — CHARACTERISTIC COMPOSITIONS BY SOME OF THE PUPILS — HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS IS GREATLY ENTERTAINED AND EXCEEDINGLY DELIGHTED.

Perhaps the most interesting part of yesterday's proceedings, and, indeed, confessedly one of the most interesting visits of the Prince and suite since their arrival in this country, was that made by the royal party to the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb. His Royal Highness and the members of his suite expressed themselves as having been exceedingly delighted with their visit. The exercises, which we fully chronicle below, were of an intensely interesting character.

The elegant and spacious buildings of the Asylum are situated in a beautiful position on Washington Heights, commanding a splendid view of the Hudson river. Thirty-seven acres of land, formerly occupied by Colonel Monroe, nephew of President Monroe, and designated Fanwood, in honor of his daughter Fanny, are laid out in the neatest style of landscape gardening. In these splendid grounds—worth half a million dollars, and fronting on the river—the buildings

have been erected at a cost of about three hundred thousand dollars. The Asylum is in every way admirably adapted to the purpose for which it was designed. Accommodations are provided for five hundred pupils, with every comfort and convenience. There are in the Institution now only three hundred pupils, males and females, who are arranged in fifteen different classes for the purpose of instruction; but in erecting these new asylum buildings the directors were wisely governed more by anticipations for the future than by the present actual necessities. The Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb is one of the most worthy institutions in the land. There are about twenty such asylums in this country, and many more in Europe, but the New York institution is acknowledged to be the finest of them all. The system of instruction adopted in the American institutions is superior to that employed on the Continent; and the distinctive language of signs, especially in its highest developments—as when it rises into the region of abstractions—is here brought to a state of remarkable perfection. The good Abbe De L'Epee, who may be said to be the father of the sign language, was in the habit of closely observing the natural means of communication which the deaf mutes whom he taught under the old system employed among themselves to give expression to their feelings and sentiments, and by selecting the most suggestive and beautiful signs for different objects, and by careful thought and study, proceeded to develop one of the most expressive means of communication between kindred minds. Since his day, experience has suggested, and led to be adopted, a number of improvements. These the pupils of this Institution enjoy to the fullest extent. From the lowest stages of comprehension they are conducted through the various gradations to the highest forms of emotional expression. The deaf mutes are cordially invited to enter the asylum, and if their parents are able and willing to pay for them well and good; but in the absence of such a desirable contingency, the State pays the Institution one hundred and fifty dollars per annum for the maintenance and education of each person. This amount entitles each to all the privileges of the Institu-

tion. The pupils are instructed in the various branches of education —reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, history, moral science, and natural philosophy, astronomy, French, logic, and rhetoric, and Eng, lish composition—in which some of them exhibit most astonishing proficiency. They are also instructed in the practical part of various industrial employments, ample facilities for which are furnished in the Institution; so that after a certain term of years they are prepared to go out into the world intelligent citizens, and capable of providing for their own subsistence.

A few weeks ago Mr. Cyrus W. Field, who is one of the directors, went with Mr. Archibald, the British Consul, to see the Institution, on which occasion the anticipated visit of the Prince of Wales to the city of New York was mentioned. Several of the pupils in the higher classes were asked if they would like to have the Prince of Wales pay a visit to the Asylum, and were requested to write down their sentiments on the subject. The replies were all unanimous for his coming, and, through the kindness of the managers of the Institution where copies were kept, we are enabled to give the public the sentiments expressed on that occasion.

Mr. Willis Hubbard, one of the pupils, wrote:—

"It affords us indescribable pleasure this delightful afternoon to welcome to our Institution Mr. Cyrus W. Field, one of our honored directors, and lady, accompanied by Mr. Archibald, the British Consul at this port. As I had, no longer ago than this morning, read in one of the daily papers an account of the efforts of Mr. Archibald and several other British residents in New York to extend to the Prince of Wales a suitable reception on his arrival at the great Western metropolis, I was surprised to meet him, and divined who he was when I first saw his name mentioned. As we are asked whether we would be pleased to have the Prince visit us, I will simply state that we would be afforded more happiness in beholding "England's hope" than by anything else. I hope the influence possesed by our distinguished visitor will be successfully exerted on this occasion in accordance with our wishes."

Mr. David R. Tillinghast, another pupil, thus expressed his sentiments:—

"We feel highly flattered by the honor which Edward M. Archibald, Esq., the British Consul in this city, has conferred upon us of visiting an Institution to which we, once thought little better than the brutes, owe so much for the ability to express our pleasure in seeing him and his wife. We are also glad to see Mr. and Mrs. Cyrus W. Field, to whose interest we are proud to say that we have a good claim. Mr. Cyrus W. Field has asked us whether we wish to have the Prince of Wales come here. It is with pleasure that we say yes. We hope that Mr. Archibald will be pleased to acquiesce in our earnest request to bring the Prince here, which he can do on account of his connection with the British government."

Miss E. Ida Montgomery gave expression to her feelings on the subject in the following beautiful manner:—

"It is with unfeigned pleasure that we again extend a welcome, as genial as the sunshine which to-day enlivens the earth, to Mr. and Mrs. Cyrus W. Field and the lady and gentleman who accompany them. Of the latter, we are informed that one is the English Consul, and although we cannot greet him with his national air of "God Save the Queen," such a welcome as is in the power of the voiceless to give, we most cordially tender. We are asked whether we should like to see the Prince of Wales, and although I acknowledge no nobility, save such as Pope describes, no aristocracy in the crimson life current that courses alike through our veins, I unhesitatingly answer, yes; for to see him to whom, in all probability, will be entrusted the supreme power, under God, over millions of people, and the government of the greatest empire on earth, and in addition to all this, the son of one to be whose son were alone a passport to our hearts, would indeed be an honor and a happiness to be oft recurred to through life—a white day amidst many dark ones. To us the visit of the heir apparent of the British throne to this country seems an auspicious omen, and an event which will tend to draw still closer the bond of sympathy which must ever exist between people so closely allied as are those of England and America, and that the love-current flashing along "the golden cord" may, unlike the electrical fluid whose flow we once celebrated,

never be interrupted, even temporarily, is our earnest hope and wish."

Thus it is observed that the inmates themselves expressed a deep desire to see his Royal Highness. A visit to the Institution, however, had already been designed as a part of the programme of his sojourn in New York.

After visiting the University yesterday, the Free Academy, the Central Park, where he planted an English oak and an American elm, and the residence of Mayor Wood, on the Bloomingdale road, where he partook of an elegant repast, it was arranged that the Prince of Wales and retinue should proceed to the Deaf and Dumb Asylum. The matter had been kept comparatively quiet; yet a large, but exceedingly select party of ladies and gentlemen met at the Institution to participate in the pleasures of the occasion.

At the Institution, everything had been well arranged in good season, without any hurry or bustle. It was expected that the distinguished strangers would arrive at three o'clock. Half an hour before, the children were seated in the spacious chapel on the second floor, where they are in the habit of assembling daily, morning and evening, for prayers, and where regular religious exercises are held on the Sabbath. The spectators, who were present by special invitation, also secured their seats in good season. The chapel, which accommodates about eight hundred, was filled to its utmost capacity, and everything was waiting for the appearance of the Prince.

While he is yet absent, it is interesting and instructive to glance around the room. At the eastern end, arranged on a platform, are large slates upon which the pupils are to write. The three front seats are reserved for the Prince of Wales and suite and such invited guests as may accompany the party. The pupils, ranging from the ages of ten to twenty years, are seated immediately behind—the males on the one side, and the females on the other. Behind these are the spectators, crowded out to the door. There are a number of noticeable per-

sons present. Perhaps the most important and interesting individual in the room is the principal of the Institution, HARVEY P. PEET, LL. D. He learned the art of teaching deaf mutes from the Rev. Dr. GALLAUDET, who was the first instructor of the language of signs in this country. Dr. Gallaudet taught in the American Asylum at Hartford. Dr. PEET went there in 1822, nearly forty years ago, and attained distinction in the art of teaching. About ten years later he came to the Asylum in New York, which at that time had few in number, and an inferior system of instruction. His useful labors in assisting materially to build up and improve the institution are well known, and need no special mention. In the chapel are also seen his three sons, who are all teachers in the institution, the eldest of whom, ISAAC LEWIS PEET, A. M., is the Vice-Principal. The wife of this gentleman is a semi-mute, and a most gifted and estimable personage. She has composed some verses giving a welcome to the Prince, which will be interpreted after his Royal Highness arrives and the exercises have commenced. Miss E. IDA MONTGOMERY, a member of the highest class, is also a highly-gifted lady, and one of the favorites in the Institution. She has a wonderful command of written language, and writes beautiful compositions, replete with exquisite sentiment. Another exceedingly talented young lady, one who has been in the asylum for nearly a dozen years, is Miss GERTRUDE WALTER, whose exquisite delicacy of feeling and unsurpassed attainments in the language of signs in its highest forms, have elicited the admiration of all who know her. There is also sitting on one of the seats on the same side of the room, an interesting little orphan girl who was picked up in one of the worst neighborhoods of the city, taken to the Asylum, and named Mary Fanwood—after the title of the estate upon which the Asylum is situated. One of the young men sitting near the platform is DAVID R. TILLINGHAST, a young gentleman of brilliant talents and extensive acquirements. Other pupils scarcely less interesting are in the room, but we have not opportunity to describe them, for there is an excitement among the voiceless, and in subdued tones those who are blessed

with the gift of speech murmur the announcement that "the Prince is coming."

Precisely at three o'clock in the afternoon the party arrived in front of the Institution. They immediately alighted, were met by the President and Trustees, and escorted up to the chapel. Walking with Mr. Winthrop, the President, the Prince of Wales entered the chapel, accompanied by the members of the party and followed by the Trustees of the Institution. All the people rose when he entered, and when he approached the platform, resumed their seats again. It was a beautiful sight to witness the joy of the pupils, which was communicated to each other in their own impressive and peculiar manner. The Prince sat between the President and Mayor Wood, on one of the front seats. Then Dr. Harvey P. Peet, rose and addressed his Royal Highness as follows :—

"Baron Renfrew,—In behalf of the Institution which I have the honor to represent, I beg leave to tender you a cordial welcome, not the less sincere, although of necessity it must be brief. In your tour throughout our extensive country, you must have seen every variety of natural scenery—our lakes, our rivers, our mountains, our broad prairies, our municipal institutions—and have everywhere, I trust, received that respect and consideration due to your Lordship's high position and future prospects, But this is the first Institution of the kind, I believe, that your Lordship has visited. It was founded in 1817, and has steadily increased, from time to time, as the wants of the community demanded. Its object is to restore to the condition of social life those who are deprived of the privileges which we enjoy, and to impart intellectual and moral light to those who sit in darkness and elevate them to the dignity of thinking and rational beings. They cannot give utterance to their joy and gratification on this occasion in vocal speech, but they can express the emotions of their hearts with equal sincerity and earnestness in the language of action. It numbers three hundred pupils, divided into fifteen classes; but only two of them can be exhibited on the present occasion—those who have been here only four weeks, and those who have been here seven and eight years."

The Prince rose, and gracefully bowed his acknowledgments. Three boys and three girls, from a class which had been in the Asylum only four weeks, were then brought upon the stage. It was explained that when they came there they did not know their own names, and could neither read nor write; but they had since learned to form letters with a pen, to distinguish between the written and printed characters, and had become familiar with about twenty words. They first wrote their names. Mr. GAMAGE, one of the teachers, then led them through several exercises, making the signs for "cat," "dog," "cow," "horse," and "a blue bird"—the names of which they wrote upon their slates. These fine attainments in so short a time elicited the admiration of all. These younger pupils were introduced for the purpose of showing from how low a point of intellectual development the instructors were compelled to start.

The next was a selection of three young ladies and three young gentlemen from the highest class. The teacher introduced the visitors to these pupils by the aid of signs, and suggested that some questions should be propounded to bring out the powers of the pupils. The reply was that the royal party were delighted to meet them, and wished the pupils to write on the slates whatever they chose. They turned to their slates, and while they were busy writing, the interim was occupied by one of them—Miss Walter—in rendering into signs the following piece of poetry, which had been composed for the occasion by Mrs. PEET:—

## WELCOME TO THE PRINCE.

BY MRS. MARY TOLES PEET.

Once from beyond the azure sea,
  There came to us a welcome tone:
Men paused amid their strife and toil
  To list the voice from England's throne.

And soon from out the ocean's depths,
  Where master minds a chain had bound,
A strong pulsation shook the land,
  And silence hushed the New World's sound.

How breathlessly men stopped to count
The throbs that came with measured beat,
Till one by one with trembling joy
Beheld the mystic bond complete.

The strange, new thrill sped fast and far,
And waking joy throughout the land,
Went forth the greeting England sent,
"We'll evermore go hand in hand-"

Old ocean in his wild dismay,
That man from him his power had won,
To part the nations, rent the bond;
But England sends us now her son.

Right loyally we greet him, too,
For every heart should bend, I ween,
In homage to such worth as that
Which sits enshrin'd in England's Queen.

And though no purples hang above
The brave young Briton here;
Yet retinues of kindred hearts
Send up to Heaven this cheer:—

"God save the Queen—God save the Prince!
And blessings on them shower,
And strengthen every rightful cause
That adds to England's power."

These verses were expressed in the language of signs, by Miss Walter, in a truly wonderful and effective manner; the eyes of every one, all the while, being riveted, not upon the Prince, but on the lady. When she had finished, a general sentiment of entire satisfaction was distinctly visible in the faces of the illustrious guests.

The compositions were by this time completed, and the Vice-Principal proceeded to read them from the slates. Mr. Henry A. Rumrill wrote as follows:

"It is a high compliment to us to receive, this lovely afternoon, a call from Lord Renfrew, the Duke of Newcastle, Mayor Wood,

and a number of other distinguished personages, and we acknowledge it a delightful task to tell how we feel to have the son of the "Washington of Queens" honor us with his presence. We hope he will not find his call here unsatisfactory to himself. We have not the least hope of giving him a suitable welcome, as we fear we are children, as compared to his high standing."

Mr. Willis Hubbard, expressed his feelings thus:

"It is with unbounded pleasure we welcome to our Institution the Prince of Wales, or Baron Renfrew, under which hereditary title he is traveling in this country, with his suite. As our silent tongues will not permit us to welcome him by chanting national airs, we hope that our giving Baron Renfrew a heartfelt welcome in writing on these slates, the materials of which came from the province of which he is styled the Prince, will be sufficient to express our true feelings."

Mr. David R. Tillinghast's read as follows:

"It is with a full appreciation of the great honor which the Prince of Wales has conferred upon us that we extend a cordial welcome to him. We feel that our speaking fellow-men, who have greeted him in every part of this country which he has passed through, could not be more cordial than we in expressing our pleasure in seeing him. We see in the Prince a future King of the British Empire, who will count among his subjects millions of free and Christian men. For such a vast responsibility the Prince has been prepared, by a mother whom I regard as the most Christian Queen I ever read of in history."

Then came the sentiments of the two young ladies.

Miss E. Ida Montgomery gave form to her thoughts in the following manner:

"From the length and breadth of our land has rolled one glad acclaim of welcome to the heir of England, and the son of her peerless Queen; and though we may not join our voices in the glad roll

of sound, our pleasure is not the less heartfelt, nor our welcome the less warm to him to whom the world looks as the future ruler of its mightiest nation, and the proud retinue of England's and America's noblemen who accompany him to-day. Others have expressed, far better than it is given us to do, the objects of our Institution, and the degree of success which has attended those who, in imitation of their Divine Master, have sought to give ears to the deaf and a tongue to the voiceless. And though the methods pursued in this country and in England may be different, the spirit is the same; and when again the white cliffs of Albion, as they rise from the ocean's blue, announce that "merrie England" is near, and the heart of our guest beats high with the glad greetings of his own people, we would wish him to remember that there are those among them who are silent because God hath sealed their lips."

Miss Augusta S. Eastman's slate contained the following:—

"The event which has led to our introduction to the stage, this auspicious afternoon, is one which stands rivaled in honor and glory by none in the annals of this Institution, viz., the call of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, with some of the most distinguished nobility of England. We had for quite a period looked forward anxiously and yet hopefully to the hour in which we should behold the son of the universally honored Queen of one of the greatest of empires, in speaking of the power of which, it has as justly as beautifully been remarked, "She has dotted the surface of the whole world with her possessions and military posts, whose morning drum-beat, following the sun and keeping company with the hours, circles the earth daily with one continuous and unbroken strain of the martial airs of England."

The greatest satisfaction was expressed with these compositions. Here the Prince was requested to indicate "a few subjects for the pupils to write upon." His Royal Highness suggested "Music," "The Atlantic Cable;" one of the members of his suite mentioned the "Great Eastern," and somebody added "The Clouds." Now, music was the most difficult subject that could be suggested for deaf mutes, who never heard a soul-inspiring strain, to write upon. Here is what Miss Montgomery wrote about it:—

"I have been asked to express my idea of music, that all-powerful influence, which holds the hearts of men in such a mysterious thrall, which has power to disarm the savage, and cause the wild beast to forget its fierceness, creating, while it lasts, a brief but ecstatic millenium—that incomprehensible something which gushed from the flowing heart of David, heralded the birth of the Savior, and now floats around the throne of God. What it may be in its bodily shape, if I may so express it, I know not, but I know its spirit to be harmony; and it is not alone through the medium of music that this divine spirit can make its influence felt, for we can see it in the ceaseless beat of the ocean, the dark flow of the river, and even in the waving arms and blended colors of the trees that crown our own Palisades. Nor is music alone found in inanimate nature, in things perishable, for there are those whose lives are but one grand pean, which at last merges in the perfect harmony of the perfected of God."

Mr. Hubbard wrote about the Atlantic cable:—

"Since Professor Morse applied electricity to wires, for the purpose of conveying messages from one place to another with lightning rapidity, it has been the object of many scientific gentlemen, to establish a cable across the Atlantic Ocean, between the United States and Great Britain. A trial was made, and messages were conveyed across the wide Atlantic. Holidays were given in honor of the triumph, and all the true citizens of England and America rejoiced at the new tie that bound us to our mother country. But all these were destined to be disappointed, for after working a few weeks, the cable refused to carry messages across the ocean."

Miss Eastman wrote this paragraph upon the same subject:—

"One of the proudest and noblest triumphs of American genius we esteem that of the Submarine Telegraph, which forms one of the most important links in the great chain of national interests which connect this with the mother country; and though it prove a failure —which it is universally hoped it will not—the fame of its inventor will in no wise be diminished, nor, we believe, the deep and mutual interests which unite the two greatest nations on the surface of the earth one atom lessened."

Mr. Tillinghast thus briefly spoke of the mammoth vessel :—

"The Great Eastern is a grand specimen of what English genius could achieve. This achievement in mechanical science is ranked among the proudest triumphs of which the British boast. This great ship may be one of the signs that 'the sword will soon be turned into the ploughshare, and the spear into the pruning-hook.'"

Miss Eastman said only this about the clouds :—

"I have been requested to give my ideas in connection with clouds, the exact nature of which I do not profess to be a good naturalist enough to explain, yet I know that they are filled with that indispensable beverage to both man and nature, without which no amount of gold and jewels could purchase life, and that they constitute one of the chief beauties of the firmament."

It is almost impossible to give an adequate idea of the pleasure which the Prince and party felt at this interesting entertainment. After those compositions had been read, Mr. Gamage rendered in pantomime the scene of Christ stilling the tempest, which was executed in a highly artistic manner. The Prince of Wales and his suite then ascended the platform, when the Principal introduced them to the company. A shower of boquets almost deluged his Royal Highness, who smiled and appeared particularly pleased. He gave his autograph to Mrs. Peet, the authoress of the poem, to whom, together with Miss Walter, he was personally presented. It was expected that the visit would be limited to fifteen minutes, but when that time had expired the Prince expressed his desire to remain longer, and accordingly the exercises were protracted for nearly an hour. He, together with the Duke of Newcastle and other members of the party, repeated that they had been gratified far beyond their expectations. At last they proceeded from the chapel, and, re-entering their carriages, drove off towards High Bridge. The visit to the Deaf and Dumb Asylum formed an interesting passage in the tour of the Prince, and the occasion will be a memorable one in the annals of the Institution.